



## **FROM ITALY TO VIETNAM TO LUXURY YACHT CRUISING, VIRTUOSO® CLIENTS LEAD THE WAY IN UPSCALE EXPERIENTIAL TRAVEL**

### **- Virtuoso Reveals Its Top 10 & Hot 10 Lists for Fall Travel -**

**LAS VEGAS (August 11, 2015)** – This week leading international luxury travel network [Virtuoso®](#) is conducting its 27<sup>th</sup> annual Virtuoso Travel Week conference – an event akin to Fashion Week where travel buyers seek out the latest trends in luxury experiences by meeting with thousands of travel purveyors, all preferred partners of the network. At the center of this remarkable exchange sits Virtuoso, which is able to view the industry through a unique and very wide lens to assess what's next on the horizon for luxury travel, which in turn sets the pace and demand for more mainstream vacations. Aided by the network's proprietary data warehouse of more than \$35 billion in transactions, Virtuoso has become recognized throughout the industry as an authoritative trend predictor, and has set its scope to determine the top destinations for the fall and early winter of 2015.

At a time when reports show as many as four out of 10 people not taking a vacation in over a year, clients of the Virtuoso network, which caters to those seeking enhanced service and richer, more personalized travel experiences, are ramping up their journeys. Regarded as some of the most upscale and influential travelers, Virtuoso clients are more than four times more likely to have recently booked travel.

“Today's consumers purchase travel in a much more personalized way, looking for attributes in products and services that reflect who they are and the lifestyles they lead,” says Matthew D. Upchurch, Chairman and CEO for Virtuoso. “They self-identify based on how they view themselves, and they have a multitude of travel personalities depending on where they are going and who is traveling with them. Our goal is to create an enriching experience every time, whether they're traveling to someplace more known like Europe or a destination further afar like Southeast Asia.”

While summer is winding down, those needing to fulfill their wanderlust should not fret. Virtuoso says fall is actually a great time to travel. With summer vacation travel over, corporate/business travel softens right after Labor Day, making fall “low season” for domestic and some international air carriers. So where to go next? While tried and true favorites still attract the bulk of business, Virtuoso is seeing the rise of more unique locales as it compares destinations with the most year-over-year demand.

#### **The Virtuoso Top 10:**

The most popular destinations for fall leisure travel based on future bookings, these are the spots where people will be flocking.

1. Italy
2. Mexico
3. United Kingdom
4. South Africa
5. Australia
6. New Zealand
7. France
8. China
9. Germany
10. Canada

**The Top 10 analysis:** Europe continues to dominate the list of favored destinations, thanks in large part to the softer euro, and Italy has bypassed the summer's top destination for Virtuoso travelers, the U.K. With a 34 percent increase in air bookings alone, Canada is the fastest growing of the Top 10 Destinations.

**The Virtuoso Hot 10:**

As the countries seeing the biggest jump in year-over-year bookings, these are the destinations where more seasoned travelers will be venturing.

1. Vietnam (+270%)
2. India (+212%)
3. French Polynesia (+91%)
4. Spain (+53%)
5. Argentina (+46%)
6. Canada (+34%)
7. U.S. Virgin Islands (+32%)
8. Peru (+28%)
9. Costa Rica (+27%)
10. Netherlands (+25%)

**The Hot 10 analysis:** This fall travelers are seeking the cultural appeal, favorable climate and relative value of Vietnam and India, and in a big way as both are seeing massive increases in future bookings. Less traditional European continues like Spain and the Netherlands are on the rise, while those looking for a seasonal switch will be heading to Argentina and Peru. And for those simply seeking sun, French Polynesia, the U.S. Virgin Islands and Costa Rica provide just the thing.

Despite the travel boom on a global level, with more than 1.1 billion people crossing borders last year, Virtuoso says its clients are seeking out highly personalized experiences. Luxury yacht cruising is seeing some of the strongest growth – up 15 percent when compared to last year – which is topped by expedition cruising, up 41 percent. Both surpass traditional ocean cruising, which is up 12 percent over last year.

Data is sourced from Virtuoso's United States and Canadian-based travel agency members. The findings were announced during the group's 27<sup>th</sup> annual Virtuoso Travel Week taking place this week at Bellagio Resort & Casino in Las Vegas.

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**About Virtuoso:**

**Virtuoso®** is the leading international travel agency network specializing in luxury and experiential travel. This by-invitation-only organization comprises over 370 agency members with more than 9,800 elite travel advisors in 30 countries throughout North America, Latin America, the Caribbean, Europe, Asia-Pacific and the Middle East. Drawing upon its preferred relationships with 1,700 of the world's best hotels and resorts, cruise lines, airlines, tour companies and premier destinations, the network provides its upscale clientele with exclusive amenities, rare experiences and privileged access. More than (US) \$14 billion in annual travel sales makes Virtuoso a powerhouse in the luxury travel industry. For more information, visit [virtuoso.com](http://virtuoso.com).

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